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ANNEX

Soviet Plotting in Baluchistan?

Both Islamabad and Tehran believe that Moscow is supporting an effort to establish an independent Baluchistan, but there is no independent evidence of Soviet involvement.

Nearly half a million Iranian Baluchis, about half of Pakistan's 1.8 million Baluchis, some 400,000 closely associated Brahui speaking tribesmen, and about 70,000 Afghan Baluchis, live in southeastern Iran, Pakistan's Baluchistan Province, and in southern Afghanistan. Although many governments have tried to govern the desolate mountain and desert area, none has exercised effective control over the tribes, which have resisted all efforts to interfere with their tribal independence or impose alien concepts of law and order.

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[REDACTED]

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— Neither country [REDACTED] has produced any real proof of Soviet involvement, and both could be overestimating the Soviet role in Baluchistan, for different reasons.

In Pakistan, the central government--which recently saw East Pakistan, the country's most populous province, gain its independence--is sensitive about all separatist sentiment. [REDACTED]


[REDACTED] Suspensions of ultimate Soviet control are inevitable in such a situation, but the Pakistanis have not limited their suspicions to Moscow. They have even suspected Tehran of trying to foment tribal rebellion within their borders.

Iran is not as worried about separatism, but is much more worried about Soviet plans to carve up Iran.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] In the 1940s, Moscow did support an independence movement among Iranian Kurdish tribes and used its own troops in an effort to establish an independent Azerbaijan in northern Iran. Pakistan and Iran exchange intelligence information (and misinformation) and their suspicions presumably have reinforced the views of leaders in both countries.

Local Communists and other leftists in Pakistani Baluchistan are exploiting provincial autonomy, which is a convenient issue for them. If only to keep its options open, the USSR may well be giving them some limited support or even helping the tribes directly. It appears unlikely that Moscow is especially interested in creating an unstable, independent Baluchistan, which the USSR would be no more able to control than any other foreign government has been. Major road, rail and port construction would be required before the independent Baluchistan that [REDACTED] fears could give the USSR


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overland access to the Indian Ocean. The USSR presumably also realizes that in the process of establishing Baluchistan, Iran and Pakistan would be greatly alienated from Moscow. In addition, India would not be pleased by such direct Soviet involvement in the sub-continent, and a further breakup of Pakistan would work against Moscow's apparent desire for stability in South Asia.

